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SUBJECT: MFA U/S COMMENTS ON AL SUMMIT, LEBANON AND KOSOVO

Classified By: CDA Misenheimer for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary: In an April 8 conversation with CDA, MFA U/S Khaled Al-Jarallah commented on the recently-concluded Arab League Summit, initiatives by Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri to resolve his country's presidential crisis, and the lack of a GCC decision to recognize Kosovo. Discussion of Iraq issues reported septel. End summary.

AL Summit Fruitless  
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12. (C) U/S Jarallah downplayed the significance of the recently concluded Arab League Summit in Damascus, admitting "We achieved nothing." He quipped that the only substantive decision reached was to hold the next AL Summit in Doha, instead of Somalia. The U/S noted the Amir's frustration with the summit's lengthy agenda (30 topics) and said he recommended a much narrower scope for future agendas. Jarallah observed that Syrian President Bashar Al-Asad proved to be a "smooth" host, but did nothing to facilitate actual achievement. Libyan President Ghaddafi annoyed the Amir and other Gulfis with the bizarre assertion that 80 percent of the population of the Gulf states is 'Ajam (i.e. of Persian origin). The Amir's pointed riposte - "Do you believe that I am Ajami?" - initiated a pointless contretemps that typified the entire dead-end summit.

Berri to Host a "National Dialogue"  
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13. (C) Jarallah expressed intense interest in the latest developments in the Lebanon crisis. According to Jarallah, Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri said during the AL Summit that Al-Asad is optimistic about the situation in Lebanon and is willing to cooperate in resolving the political impasse. Consequently, Berri has invited all Lebanese stakeholders to participate in a "National Dialogue" to plot a way forward - an invitation rejected by PM Siniora. Jarallah claimed that, overall, the GOK had seen some movement on Lebanon and intimated that the French were planning to approach Iran, Syria and Lebanon with new hope of resolving the presidential impasse. Lastly, the U/S suggested that Siniora may visit Kuwait the week of April 13.

GCC to Recognize Kosovo ... "Soon"  
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14. (C) In response to CDA's request for an update on GOK policy toward Kosovo, Jarallah said he was "amazed" that the Islamic states failed to recognize Kosovo's independence during the Organization of Islamic Conference meeting in Dakar last month. He reasoned that opposition from Indonesia, Morocco and Turkey had likely scuttled the issue.

Jarallah said each GCC country would now consider this matter individually, but assured CDA - as he has on several previous occasions - that GOK and GCC recognition would be coming "soon."

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Misenheimer